



The Gavel of Delta Sigma Rho

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Maine, Muskie, and Delta Sigma Rho

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Maine, Muskie, and Delta Sigma Rho

by BROOKS QUIMBY*

How did it happen that Maine elected a Democratic governor? Television and radio commentators, news weeklies and editors have all had their guesses; here is the forensic explanation!

The Republican national committeeman from Maine said after the election, "Ed Muskie and Frank Coffin have become political dictators of Maine," which, in non-political language, means that these two young men are responsible for this remarkable campaign result.

Little did the staunch Republican members of the Bates College chapter of Delta Sigma Rho see anything ominous in the motion at their 1953 annual meeting of Frank Coffin ('40) that the chapter send its sympathy to Edmund Muskie ('36) who had fallen and broken his back in a repair job in his home. Both young lawyers had been active in Democratic politics in Maine after graduating from Harvard and Cornell Law Schools respectively, but Maine folks are tolerant of such eccentricities in young people!

But in 1954, neither was present at the annual June meeting; they were busy setting up a remarkable political campaign, with Frank as state chairman of the Democrats and Ed his candidate for governor.

Maine Democrats had never conducted such a campaign before. Perhaps a turning point came when Ed repeatedly challenged his Republican opponent, a governor running for the traditional second term usually given to incumbents of that office, to debate the issues of the campaign on the same platform with him.

There arose a forensic dilemma: the governor was sure to be defeated if he accepted the challenge and debated; so he refused—and lost the election!

This proves nothing to Maine folks, except that when a couple of Delta Sigma Rho members set out to win votes and influence people, even Maine Republicans can't stand the impact!

*Brooks Quimby is sponsor of the Bates College chapter of DSR.

Speech Training Provides Solid Background for Industrial Relations

by DONALD SHERBONDY (OWU '30)*

Since graduating from college in 1930 I have been a teacher, a lawyer, and now the director of industrial relations for a company. I can say without hesitation that the preparatory work in college which has helped me most in each of these professions was my training in public speaking and debating.

Certainly an absolute requisite of a successful teacher is the ability to stand before a class and present the subject in an effective and convincing manner. Public speaking gives that training. I have known some brilliant scholars who were not successful teachers because they lacked such training. On the other hand I have known teachers who were not outstanding scholars but who were great teachers. Their success lay in the fact that they could present the fundamental truths in such a clear and persuasive way that they made an enduring impression upon every student who was privileged to sit at their feet.

Most people, even those who know little about the practice of the law, will agree without further discussion that the lawyer should have training in public speaking. To the average layman the lawyer's stock in trade is the ability to engage in brilliant forensic encounter with an opposing lawyer in the courtroom. That is an important part of legal practice. Today, however, most legal work is not done in the courtroom, but across the conference table. Training in public speaking is just as important there as in the courtroom. The peaceful and successful settlement in the office of possible litigation takes great persuasive ability both with the lawyer's opponents and with the lawyer's client. Public speaking, especially college debating, is with-

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*Mr. Sherbondy is Director of Industrial Relations of the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co., One Gateway Center, Pittsburgh 22, Pa. He is also a lawyer, with degrees from the American University, George Washington University, and Georgetown University. As an undergraduate at Ohio Wesleyan, he was a leading debater and, in his senior year, president of the student body.